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Activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/124 B, provides a summary of the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from July 2012 to February 2013 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its strategic communications services.

As part of its strategic communications services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department, implemented by its Strategic Communications Division, the Department develops and implements strategies for communicating United Nations messages on priority issues. The Division also manages the Department's network of over 60 field offices. As the secretariat of the United Nations Communications Group and its task forces, the Division seeks to strengthen the coordination of communications across the United Nations system.

The activities under the other subprogrammes of the Department, namely news services and outreach services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2013/3 and A/AC.198/2013/4, respectively).

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 67/124 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session (A/AC.198/2012/2-4) and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the information requested in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

3. The present report covers the activities of the Department related to its thematic campaigns, highlighting its strategic approach and providing a summary of its communications campaigns on key issues, and those of the network of United Nations information centres, including their multilingual work.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period from July 2012 to February 2013.

II. Communications campaigns

A. Strategic approach of the Department

5. The Department uses communications campaigns and materials to help the Organization achieve its substantive goals within the three broad pillars of its work: development, human rights and peace and security. Its strategic approach is based on the identification of communications priorities in advance, the targeted delivery of information products through all of its components, including the global network of United Nations information centres, and the optimal use of available resources through collaboration with all partners, including Secretariat departments and United Nations system entities. In addition to targeting traditional media by preparing background materials, press briefings and media interviews, the Department leverages social media to promote United Nations messages, news stories, campaign materials and behind-the-scenes, engaging, real-time content. The use of those interactive platforms broadens the reach of the messages of the United Nations and contributes to the overall transparency and accountability of the Organization.

6. Between July and December 2012, the number of followers of the main United Nations Twitter account in English increased steadily, and the account currently has more than 1.2 million followers. According to Klout, a social media influence measurement service, the account inspires actions and discussions among its followers with nearly every message. Klout indicates that, in addition to having an impact on general issues linked to the United Nations, the Twitter account is particularly popular on the following topics: human rights, combating racism, ending violence against women, access to water, the work of the Security Council, the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and the question of Palestine.

7. Working with Facebook, the Department was able to deactivate unofficial United Nations Facebook accounts and increase the number of fans of the English-language official page to over 265,000. Exceptionally popular posts that are shared widely are estimated to reach about 500,000 fans. The Department also has a notable presence on Google Plus, with 700,000 fans.

8. Keeping abreast of the latest social media tools, in 2012 the Department launched a United Nations profile on Pinterest, a platform that allows users to group and share favourite content, such as images, infographics and videos. The Department also created a blog to showcase content designed specifically for social media.

B. Thematic campaigns

1. United Nations peace operations

9. The Department of Public Information continued its close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs to promote and backstop United Nations peace operations, including through participation in the work of various thematic or country-specific integrated task forces and working groups led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs.

10. The Department continued to host the United Nations peacekeeping website, which is maintained in close collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in all six official languages. The joint web editorial board of the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations continued its twice-monthly meetings, covering a variety of issues relating to the maintenance of the website and ways to improve and/or change existing content and the use of social media. In addition, to ensure that the home page remains up to date with dynamic content, the web editorial group continued to plan short-term online campaigns. The two departments worked together to launch a digital campaign on the theme "A global effort to advance peace on the ground" to coincide with the start of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The campaign was intended to demonstrate how individual Member State contributions to peacekeeping benefit people on the ground and included a new feature — an interactive "wall of faces" that allowed the user to click on a face and find out the story behind the image. Each image highlighted the impact that a Member State or peacekeeping mission had on the ground. Another major online campaign of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, entitled "Year in review", was launched on the website in late December and focused on the main peacekeeping developments in 2012.

11. The Department, working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, arranged for the installation of the multimedia exhibit on the theme "Momentum: Timor-Leste forges a vibrant future". The exhibition was produced by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and was co-hosted by the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations. To mark the successful completion of the UNMIT mandate, the Department produced a backgrounder in all six official

languages for worldwide dissemination through the United Nations information centres and digital platforms.

12. The Department, working with the Office of the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti and the Department of Field Support, prepared a media backgrounder to promote the Secretary-General's Initiative for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti, which was broadly disseminated worldwide.

13. As the conflict in the Syrian Arabic Republic remained at the centre of global attention, the Department worked with United Nations system partners at Headquarters and in the region to promote the improved coverage of political efforts on and humanitarian assistance to the Syrian Arabic Republic. A communications team created to help ensure coordinated messaging on the Syrian crisis worked with humanitarian agencies to ensure the wide dissemination of United Nations messages at Headquarters and at the regional level, especially in Arabic by the information centres in Cairo and Beirut. The Department provided the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria and his office in Cairo with communications support.

14. The Department continued to participate in the work of the various country-specific inter-agency task forces led by the Department of Political Affairs, including the newly established ones on Mali and the Central African Republic. On Mali, representatives of the Department of Public Information were involved in discussions with the Department of Political Affairs regarding the development of a communications strategy and the deployment of a public information staff member in the recently authorized multidisciplinary United Nations presence in Mali. The Department assisted with communications outreach for the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali held in Bamako on 19 October 2012. A dedicated web page with information on Mali was developed for the United Nations News Centre website.

15. The Department helped the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya in organizing a multimedia exhibit at United Nations Headquarters. The exhibit reflected the transition of Libya from dictatorship to democracy and United Nations support, featuring the General National Congress elections and touching on issues of security, human rights, transitional justice, demining and women's participation.

16. The Department, in close collaboration with the United Nations field missions, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, published the 2012 edition of its annual magazine, *United Nations Peace Operations: Year in Review*. It focused on the most important developments in United Nations peacekeeping operations and political and peacebuilding missions over the past year.

17. In the context of field support, the Department continued to assist the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs in the recruitment process for public information staff for the field missions and was part of the interview panels for the rostering process for field public information officers.

18. During the high-level segment of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Department, in close collaboration with substantive offices,

undertook a special communications effort to actively promote the high-level meetings on the rule of law at the national and international levels (24 September 2012) and on the Sahel (26 September 2012).

2. Disarmament

19. In the field of disarmament, the Department, working closely with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, provided communications support to the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (27 August-7 September), primarily by posting on social media platforms.

20. The Department collaborated with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations to commemorate the third observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, including on logistics for the General Assembly's informal meeting convened by the President of the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly and organized in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan on 6 September. The website for the Day was revamped with new content in all six official languages, and the Department's social media team posted a series of Twitter messages in the official languages to alert the audience to the Day and drive digital traffic to the Day's website. Deliberations of the informal meeting were posted online, and video footage was made available to broadcasters internationally though UNifeed. In addition, the Department assisted the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in promoting, including through social media, its high-level meeting held at Headquarters on 1 October 2012 to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

3. Counter-terrorism

21. Working closely with the Office of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the Department promoted the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and provides communications support to the Task Force and its working groups. The Department continued to assist in updating documents for the United Nations counter-terrorism website and provided weekly media monitoring reports disseminated to the Task Force entities.

22. The Department attended the retreat of the Task Force entities held on 16 and 17 December 2012 to take stock of ongoing activities and strategize on future initiatives. It also participated in the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre International Conference on National and Regional Counter-Terrorism Strategies, held in Bogota, on 31 January and 1 February 2013.

4. Millennium Development Goals

23. The Department has continued to draw attention to successes and challenges regarding the Millennium Development Goals and broader development issues. For the Secretary-General's launch in September of the report of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force, which focused on the declining levels of aid, the Department wrote and issued press materials and organized a press conference. More than 400 articles were published in the first 24 hours after the launch, primarily in the United States of America and India.

24. For the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, on 17 October, the Department worked with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Millennium Campaign and other partners to coordinate a social media action in multiple languages to raise awareness of Millennium Development Goals-related achievements and challenges with an eye towards the 2015 deadline. Over three days, the hashtag #EndPoverty reached more than 9.6 million people on Twitter, with overall impressions totalling over 46 million.

25. The Millennium Development Goals web portal (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/) continued to be updated with regular news items to serve as a reliable information source. From September to December, the site received more than 800,000 page views.

26. The Department worked closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote the launch of the Secretary-General's Education First initiative in September, including by developing messaging and information materials and through media outreach focusing on the urgent need to achieve universal access to education. Press materials highlighted commitments made by Governments and the private sector. The launch generated widespread press coverage, including by the Associated Press, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, EFE and a number of Australian media outlets. An opinion piece by the Secretary-General was also featured by the Huffington Post.

5. Post-2015 development agenda

27. The Department supports outreach efforts on the post-2015 development agenda through a number of avenues. It assisted the Secretary-General's office in preparing, through the United Nations Communications Group, joint messaging on the post-2015 agenda to enable the United Nations system to speak with one voice in support of the agenda's intergovernmental and consultation processes. A task force of the Group chaired by the Department facilitates information exchange and inter-agency outreach coordination for this complex process.

28. In close partnership with UNDP and the Millennium Campaign, the Department is promoting public participation in the "My world" global survey and "The world we want 2015" platform through its various websites and social media accounts. For the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Department assisted with media outreach and web and press materials for the first two meetings, held in New York and London, with media coverage particularly in Indonesia, Liberia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland featuring the Panel's Co-Chairs from those countries.

6. Ending violence against women

29. The Department promoted the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, working with the campaign secretariat and United Nations system partners, and was involved in planning and promoting the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, followed by the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence campaign. The year's efforts focused on urging States to meet commitments and live up to their obligations to end violence against women and girls.

30. Both in the lead-up to the International Day and throughout the 16 Days of Activism, the Department highlighted ending violence against women and girls on its social media platforms and promoted UNiTE campaign products, such as the video *A Promise Is a Promise*.

31. Many activities took place around the world during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. The United Nations Information Centre in Accra participated in three days of events in Ghana, including a national meeting, a visit to an outcast home (referred to as a "witch camp") and a youth symposium. The Information Centre in Lagos, Nigeria, organized an interactive forum where students discussed rape, human trafficking, domestic violence and sexual harassment with their teachers and representatives of non-governmental organizations and the State police. The Information Centre in Jakarta hosted a live talk show attended by 500 people to break the silence on violence against women.

32. The Information Centre in Panama City partnered with the regional office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to create a poster campaign at bus stops nationwide, encouraging citizens to reflect on the different forms of discrimination against women in their society. The United Nations office in Uzbekistan organized, with its partners, the launch of an awareness-raising campaign. To promote the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign, the United Nations office in Azerbaijan launched a social media action to disseminate information about the new UNiTE ribbon as a symbol of ending violence against women and girls. A number of the Department's field offices promoted the initiative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) of proclaiming the 25th day of every month as "Orange Day", with the slogan "Wear orange to say no to violence against women and girls".

7. Climate change

33. As Chair of the inter-agency United Nations Communications Group Task Force on Climate Change, the Department brought together some 20 United Nations partners to coordinate messaging and outreach strategy in the lead-up to the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Doha, from 26 November to 8 December, as well as at the Conference itself. The gateway to the United Nations system's work on climate change (www.un.org/climatechange), revised and updated by the Department, recorded more than 150,000 page views in the six official languages from September to December, with more than 7,000 daily visits during the Conference. A "Doha daily" blog featuring observations by a staff member of the Department was viewed more than 800 times a day during the Conference. Several Department staff, including the Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Beirut, assisted the Conference press team and senior officials on site, providing services that enabled widespread media coverage. Plans are being made to coordinate the communications strategy for 2013, including for the roll-out of the next report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

8. Sustainable development

34. Since the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012, in addition to promoting the Conference outcomes, the

Department revamped the multilingual "Future we want" website (www.un.org/futurewewant) as a public-facing platform to continue to raise awareness on the issues. Almost 200,000 page views were recorded from September to December. The Department also assisted with press outreach for the high-level event on sustainable energy for all in September, with results including coverage on business television and news services.

9. Question of Palestine

35. The Department hosted its annual training programme for Palestinian journalists from 5 November to 7 December 2012. For the first time, the programme, which is aimed at strengthening the skills and capacities of young Palestinian journalists and exposing them to the work of the United Nations at Headquarters, focused on online journalism and digital media. The Department also sought and received the largest-ever number of applications for the programme and used cost-effective video technology as part of the rigorous selection process.

36. In addition to briefings by United Nations officials, including the Secretary-General, representatives from the Department of Public Information, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the United Nations Information Centre in Washington, D.C., the group attended meetings of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee. The journalists were also present in the General Assembly Hall on 29 November for the vote on the status of Palestine in the United Nations.

37. The journalists worked through an intensive curriculum taught by two experts, producing regular assignments and final projects. The programme made extensive use of the opportunities that the cities of New York and Washington, D.C., offer as global hubs for journalism and digital communications. The group met with digital media industry leaders from Google, Twitter, Tumblr, the Huffington Post, BBC, Al Jazeera and Reuters.

38. United Nations information centres and offices around the world undertook a variety of activities in commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November with the support of the Department in New York, including events organized by the centres in Brazzaville, Cairo, Canberra, Jakarta, Mexico City, New Delhi, Pretoria, Tehran, Tunis and Yerevan. The Department, specifically its Graphic Design Unit in New York, designed the visual identity for the Department of Political Affairs' information note for the International Day and disseminated it to United Nations information centres globally.

10. Human rights

39. For Human Rights Day (10 December), the Department worked closely with OHCHR to develop and implement a campaign entitled "My voice counts", highlighting the rights of all people to make their voices heard in public life and be included in political decision-making. The visual identity developed by the Department's Graphic Design Unit in the six official languages was used around the world. The website, in six languages, received more than 100,000 unique page views in December. A multilingual social media campaign attracted an exceptionally

high level of interest, with more than 3,000 people clicking on the links posted by the Department — almost nine times the average. Four Google Plus "hangouts" (live video chats) organized by OHCHR, including one with the High Commissioner, were promoted on the United Nations Google Plus account, which has more than 700,000 fans.

40. The Department also provided promotional support to two Human Rights Day events organized by OHCHR in New York:

(a) A panel discussion at the Ford Foundation on 10 December moderated by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, with opening remarks by the Secretary-General, and featuring young activists from Australia, Egypt, Haiti and Kenya;

(b) A special event on leadership in the fight against homophobia at United Nations Headquarters on 11 December, featuring the Secretary-General, the Minister for Women's Rights of France, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, South African singer Yvonne Chaka Chaka and Puerto Rican pop star Ricky Martin, among others.

41. Around the world, events and outreach activities for Human Rights Day were organized by United Nations information centres in many locations, including Antananarivo, Athens, Beirut, Brazzaville, Brussels, Cairo, Canberra, Dakar, Dar es Salaam (United Republic of Tanzania), Dhaka, Jakarta, Lagos (Nigeria), Lusaka, Mexico City, Moscow, Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Port of Spain, Pretoria, Sana'a, Vienna, Warsaw, Yangon (Myanmar) and Yerevan.

42. The Department also promoted the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, adopted on 18 December 1992. A special event in Budapest with the Independent Expert on minority issues, Rita Izsák, was co-organized by the United Nations Information Service in Vienna. A logo and a poster created by the Graphic Design Unit in six languages were shared with field offices and with the newly founded United Nations network on racial discrimination and protection of minorities, comprising 16 United Nations departments, offices, agencies, funds and programmes.

43. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/144, the Department produced a publication containing the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference and the political declaration on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, with a view to increasing global support for and awareness of these documents. The publication was posted online, including on the Member States' delegate portal, in November. Printed copies in the six official languages will be made available in March 2013.

44. In close consultation with the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department promoted the annual Treaty Event (24-26 September and 1-2 October), which coincided with the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law. A joint press conference with the Rule of Law Unit of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General on 21 September provided journalists with information on the two events. In addition, the Department issued a Treaty Event press kit in English and French (printed and online), daily updates and a closing press release highlighting the more than 80 treaty actions taken by 40 States.

11. New Partnership for Africa's Development

45. The Department continued its efforts to promote the aims and achievements of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency as part of United Nations coordinated efforts to generate support for economic development, peace and security in Africa. It worked in close collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa and the NEPAD Agency in organizing media events in New York during the General Assembly's annual special debate on Africa. These included a press conference and press interviews with the NEPAD Chief Executive Officer, Ibrahim Mayaki, as well as producing and distributing information products highlighting NEPAD achievements. The Department created a special section on its website entitled "Africa at the General Assembly", which provided regular updates on the official activities of African leaders during the debates.

46. As part of events marking Africa Industrialization Day in November, the Department provided media support in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. The Department also organized and hosted a press conference following a briefing by a high-level delegation from the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra.

47. *Africa Renewal* magazine, published in English and French, continued to promote NEPAD activities and other broader issues pertaining to infrastructure development in Africa and the Millennium Development Goals. The August 2012 edition of the magazine carried articles that included an evaluation of Africa's gains and challenges following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, investment opportunities in Africa and the role of stock exchanges in promoting economic growth. The January 2013 edition featured Africa's economic relations with China, food policy and interviews with the Special Adviser on Africa and the Head of the Peacebuilding Commission.

48. In 2012, the *Africa Renewal* syndicated short features service, through which it produces and places short articles (800-1,000 words) in major media outlets worldwide, continued to grow. Between September 2012 and February 2013, 14 of the magazine's short articles were republished 144 times in 75 different media outlets in Africa and around the world. These feature articles were published in 21 countries, including Algeria, France, Niger, South Africa, the United States and the United Republic of Tanzania. The republication of *Africa Renewal* articles allows the Department to reach the audiences of Africa's major print and electronic media.

49. The Department produced more original content for its social media platforms than in the previous year on such areas as growing regional markets, technological advances and foreign investments. The *Africa Renewal* magazine also introduced the latest social media tools amid evidence of increasing reader interest in stories about Africa that are not found in the mainstream media. The followers of the magazine's English and French Facebook and Twitter accounts have more than doubled since 2011 (see table 1 below), while other social media accounts are also steadily growing. It also continues to expand its presence on other social media platforms, such as Google Plus, Instagram and Flickr.

Table 1
***Africa Renewal* social media profile**
(Number of followers)

Platform	*December 2011*	*December 2012*
Twitter		
@africarenewal	9 300	22 700
@ONUAfrique	5 290	9 160
Facebook		
Africa Renewal	1 200	2 640
Afrique renouveau	–	1 324

50. There has been a significant growth in the number of subscribers to the Department's e-newsletter, which is sent primarily to African journalists and provides a brief overview of new content on the *Africa Renewal* website.

51. In November, the Department participated in the annual conference of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa in support of the African Union and NEPAD held in Addis Ababa. The Advocacy and Communication Cluster of the Mechanism, of which the Department is a member, identified several projects to be implemented in 2013 as part of United Nations support for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union.

III. Network of United Nations information centres

A. Background

52. During the reporting period, the United Nations information centres, offices and services were instrumental in implementing and providing communications support in connection with a number of initiatives, including the Millennium Development Goals, the UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, the International Day of the Girl Child and the International Years of Cooperatives and of Sustainable Energy for All. Through partnerships with members of the United Nations system, local authorities, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector and through media outreach, these offices raise awareness and improve understanding of many of the pressing concerns on the global agenda.

B. Engaging local audiences worldwide

Communicating in local languages

53. In addition to working in five of the six official languages, in 2012 the United Nations information centres produced multimedia products and promotional materials in 43 languages and currently maintain websites in 31 local languages. The centres carried out numerous priority communications campaigns at the local and regional levels.

54. The use of local languages demonstrates the multilingual nature of the work of the United Nations information centres and their ability to communicate with local audiences in the languages they understand. The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City produced multimedia products in Spanish and Haitian Creole, as well as in the Chol, Guarani, Nahuatl and Tzotzil indigenous languages, to promote such issues as human rights and violence against women, a problem that affects indigenous communities in particular in the region. The information materials are posted on the Centre's website in both the print and audio versions, with the latter version being used and redisseminated through a network of community radio stations.

55. Currently, 35 United Nations information centres produce their own newsletters in 15 local languages: Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Czech, Georgian, German, Hindi, Japanese, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Sinhala, Tamil, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Uzbek.

56. The information centres are also instrumental in translating and placing op-ed pieces by the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials in media outlets owing to their knowledge of the local media and long-standing working relationships with them. For example, the information centres placed the Secretary-General's op-ed article urging world leaders to press ahead with initiatives on sustainable energy, education, nutrition and women's and children's health. Entitled "A call to ambition", the article was published in 44 outlets in 29 countries, having been translated into Armenian, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Persian, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovene and Turkish, as well as all six official languages.

Local radio and television broadcasts

57. The United Nations Information Centre in Beirut was successful in securing pro bono television programming with several television stations. In cooperation with Heya TV, the only Arab station dedicated to promoting women's issues, such as education, gender equality, health and violence against women, the Centre worked on a weekly television programme on women's empowerment and their effective inclusion in societies. The show, entitled *Her Excellency the Minister*, profiled women activists who wish to become a Government minister. It has been broadcast since 16 October 2012 and was scheduled to run over a period of three months initially.

58. In connection with the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, the United Nations Information Centre in Beirut launched an awareness campaign on sustainable energy in partnership with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Lions Clubs International and MTV Lebanon. The idea of the media campaign on MTV, dubbed "Change your habits, save your energy", was to turn energy saving into a daily habit, educating people through simple tips to alter their daily energy-wasting behaviour. The campaign's key messages were delivered through the entire grid of MTV Lebanon and through customized daily public service announcements (with United Nations logos) over a period of one week in May 2012. The campaign reached some 40 million viewers over a period of one week. Local, regional and international media also praised the initiative, resulting in 22 further television appearances and 24 press clippings.

59. In October 2012, the United Nations Information Centre in Dakar renewed an agreement with the national television network Radiodiffusion télévision

sénégalaise for a second series of eight 30-minute episodes of a television programme entitled *Panorama ONU*. The programme featured various United Nations projects carried out in the country within the context of the Millennium Development Goals, including child and maternal mortality, health, environment, human rights and drug trafficking. The Centre's initiative was carried out with the backing and the financial support of United Nations country team members.

60. The United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta has an ongoing partnership with the State-run broadcast media of Indonesia, Radio Republik Indonesia and Televisi Republik Indonesia. Collaboration with Radio Republik Indonesia has included the production of several live discussion shows on topics of United Nations concern, including a media forum on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in September, and collaboration with Televisi Republik Indonesia yielded a two-part national television programme aired on United Nations Day (24 October).

Innovative outreach at the local level and beyond

61. The United Nations Information Centre in New Delhi continued its yearly 12-day "Peace to non-violence" campaign, which started in 2009 in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), schools, universities and cultural centres. The campaign, which starts on the International Day of Peace (21 September) and concludes on the International Day of Non-Violence (2 October), focuses on peace education, the link between peace and development, human rights and intercultural dialogue, among other issues.

62. The United Nations Information Centre in Panama City organized an advertising campaign against racism entitled "What do you see" by mounting posters of ethnically diverse people in bus stops nationwide. The campaign ran from February to December 2012.

63. In October 2012, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna launched "The United Nations in the classroom", an initiative involving tour guides going to schools to give briefings.

64. The United Nations Information Centre in Windhoek joined the World Health Organization, the Government of Namibia and local NGOs in the 7 Days of Activism against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking campaign in June 2012, which included television and radio talk shows and public events.

From "United Nations Day" to "United Nations Week": the "United Nations works for you" outreach programme

65. Many United Nations information centres continued to organize United Nations Week, extending the observance of United Nations Day into an entire week and, with some centres, even longer in order to work more extensively with the United Nations country teams, Government ministries, NGOs, academic institutions and other civil society actors. In 2012, the "United Nations works for you" ("UN4U") outreach campaign organized by the information centres as part of United Nations Day reached more than 65,000 students.

66. The Information Centre in Jakarta and 12 resident United Nations agencies, funds and programmes came together for a three-week campaign to educate Indonesians on the work they do. They visited 30 schools located in 12 provinces,

from Sumatra to Papua, reaching about 8,000 students in English and Bahasa Indonesia. The Centre conducted a survey among 1,704 participants, which showed an increase in their understanding of the work of the United Nations as a result of these programmes. The campaign was featured in a special television programme broadcast nationally by Televisi Republik Indonesia. Radio Republik Indonesia/ Voice of Indonesia also aired programmes on the United Nations to mark the beginning and end of the campaign.

67. The Information Centre in La Paz organized a soccer match between the United Nations country team and Government officials. Under the Say NO — UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, the match was held at the Olympic Stadium in La Paz. The match was attended by Government officials, diplomats, United Nations colleagues, journalists and their families.

68. The 2012 United Nations Day in Austria put a strong focus on interacting with students: bringing the United Nations to the classroom and taking students into the Organization's offices. The United Nations Information Service in Vienna had a "shadowing programme", in which 43 university students were selected to accompany United Nations staff members from 17 to 31 October 2012.

C. Working with Member States at the local level

69. United Nations information centres continued to partner and work closely with Member States at the local level on a range of issues. Highlights include the following:

(a) The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels, together with the Ministry of Defence of Belgium, organized a panel discussion on United Nations peacekeeping operations at the Royal Military Academy in Brussels;

(b) The United Nations Information Centre in Manama has been working with the Government of Bahrain, including the offices of the King and the Prime Minister, to issue statements marking key international days. In 2012, messages were issued for World Press Freedom Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the International Day of Peace and Human Rights Day;

(c) Over the past six years, the United Nations Information Centre in Moscow has been implementing an advocacy campaign in support of persons with disabilities. The Centre has been acting as a convener of an informal "group of friends of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", comprising representatives of United Nations agencies, Government, business and pro-disabled NGOs and addressing policy issues;

(d) On the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, the Information Centre in Ouagadougou arranged a 45-minute television programme about the importance of partnerships between Member States and regional organizations in peacekeeping operations.

D. Special observances

International Day of the Girl Child

70. United Nations information centres marked the first observance of the International Day of the Girl Child with the theme "Ending child marriage", focusing on a fundamental human rights violation that affects all aspects of a girl's life.

71. The Information Centre in Ankara joined forces with more than 50 NGOs, universities and foundations to launch the "Say no to child brides" national platform. The platform will seek partnerships with like-minded groups around the world and issue recommendations in 2014 on promoting girls' rights in Turkey. The Information Centre in Canberra partnered with the Government of Australia to hold a high-level discussion at the country's parliament. The Information Centre in Ouagadougou, the Ministry of Education of Burkina Faso and national television co-produced a television programme that discussed strategies to promote girls' education across Africa in the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

72. Other information centres organized joint activities with United Nations country team members. The Information Centre in Colombo supported the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in a panel discussion, and the Information Centre in New Delhi wrote a letter, along with the heads of UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women, to the Minister for Women and Child Development of India on the scourge of child marriages. The Information Centre in Panama City supported the regional office of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in organizing a forum to recognize the fundamental role played by girls and women during disasters and their resilience in rebuilding their communities. The Information Centre in Tokyo held an event with partners at United Nations University in which more than 370 participants "raised their hands for girls".

73. Young people around the world were encouraged to express their views on child marriage in interviews, articles and social media tools and at events organized by the information centres. The United Nations Information Centre in Accra produced a video featuring schoolchildren interviewed on the situation in Ghana, which was screened before the African Women Cultural Leaders Network meeting. The United Nations Office in Azerbaijan and representatives of a rehabilitation centre for juvenile offenders visited the youth house for girls of an SOS Children's Village, where they discussed education as the vehicle to becoming successful women. The Information Centre in Dakar featured in its newsletter the story of a 28-year-old woman who was given away at age 14, and the Information Centre in Nairobi hosted disadvantaged girls at its compound for an interactive exchange.

74. In addition, the Secretary-General's message for the Day was translated into Azeri, Bahasa Indonesia, Persian and Turkish. Information materials were also translated into local languages for media dissemination.

International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

75. Several information centres worked to amplify the message of the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. Reaching out to students, the United Nations Office in Belarus conducted an exhibition in the art gallery of the University of Culture and Arts entitled "Techno art — alternative energy". The

United Nations Information Centre in Canberra was involved in a photographic competition that culminated in an exhibition at a science museum. The competition involved 120 university advertising students and seven energy themes, for which the students developed advertising pitches as part of their coursework. The Information Centre in Dhaka organized a meeting with students from different universities.

76. In cooperation with UNDP, the United Nations office in Armenia promoted a media contest for journalists to learn and write about the issue. The United Nations Information Centre in Colombo had a booth at a State exhibition on the best energy conservation projects. The United Nations office in Tbilisi organized a five-day conference and participated in a children's art exhibition involving more than 120 vulnerable and minority children. The Information Centre in Mexico City co-launched the annual report of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization; the launch was webcast and streamed live in the region and picked up by the international media. The Centre also organized a youth conference with other partners on non-renewable and alternative energy.

77. The United Nations office in Uzbekistan jointly organized with UNDP and experts from the Republic of Korea a live Google Plus "hangout" with Uzbek students to discuss the importance of education in equipping them to take the lead in promoting sustainable development goals beyond 2015. Live Twitter coverage and the dialogue took place simultaneously.

78. Several information centres, including those located in Accra, Algiers and Port of Spain, wrote articles and disseminated information to the media on the Year's launch, which resulted in extensive coverage. The United Nations Information Centre in Beirut prepared an article that was featured in the weekly United Nations page in *Al-Balad* and in the biweekly section of *Al-Mustaqbal*. It also co-organized a press conference to launch a week-long sustainable energy campaign.

79. Information materials for the Year were translated into Armenian, Georgian, Kirundi, Persian and Polish and posted on the information centres' websites. Several centres designed dedicated web pages for the Year.

International Year of Cooperatives

80. With the theme "Cooperative enterprises build a better world", the information centres worked to increase awareness of the International Year of Cooperatives. During the reporting period, the United Nations Information Centre in Beirut gave television and radio interviews about the Year, placed op-ed articles in English and Arabic in newspapers and disseminated stories and news on its website and Facebook page and to a regional Arab media database. The United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels organized a press conference with the city of Toulouse and the Engineering School of Purpan, which was attended by the President of Coop de France and interpreted in sign language. The Centre officially launched the Year with those partners and with the participation of six cooperatives from the agriculture, technology and banking and credit sectors. The Information Centre in Warsaw published an article in the magazine *Tecza Polska*.

81. Information centres around the world actively participated in the International Year of Cooperatives Short Film Festival. The Information Centre in Colombo directed, produced and won a Film Festival award for its video *Red Chillies,* in which cooperatives brighten the lives of Sri Lankan women who are unable to

obtain fair prices for their produce. The United Nations office in Ukraine launched an information campaign through the national and local media to encourage cooperative associations to produce and submit films to the Film Festival. The United Nations office in Armenia promoted the issue through an art exhibition by Samvel Sevada, a well-known local painter. The Information Centre in Bogota maintained a stall at the twenty-fifth International Book Fair in Bogota, and its Director was a key speaker at the twelfth National Congress of Cooperatives, organized by the Confederation of Cooperatives of Colombia in Cartagena on 26 and 27 July 2012. The Centre in Rio de Janeiro organized and addressed a one-day conference with 300 participants from cooperatives and launched the book *Contemporary Cooperativism: Path to Sustainability*.

E. Expanding the use of new information and communications technologies

United Nations Information Centre websites

82. Throughout 2012, the websites of information centres around the world registered a total of some 10 million visits. Of those, 5.6 million visits were to material in languages other than the official languages. This clearly demonstrates the rising popularity of the use of local languages and the importance of engaging local populations in their mother tongue. Over 30 million page views were recorded on the centres' websites in 2012, a 42 per cent increase compared to 2011 owing to the promotion in the local languages of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

Use of social media tools

83. As many as 32 information centres have Facebook accounts and, of those, 17 have accounts in languages other than English. They have 22 Twitter accounts, of which 10 are in languages other than English, and 18 YouTube accounts, including 7 in other languages besides English. A growing number of people follow those accounts, with a total of 141,000 followers on Twitter and 172,000 on Facebook and more than 400,000 views of videos on the YouTube accounts (see table 2).

84. The United Nations Information Centre in Buenos Aires produced a nine-minute film on the beneficiaries of four United Nations programmes. It was posted on the United Nations multimedia website and the official Spanish-language Twitter and Facebook accounts of the United Nations in October 2012. It is also being distributed on a regular basis to the Centre's civil society partners, in particular Model United Nations organizers. A shorter version of the film and four public service announcements on the work of the United Nations in Argentina were also launched on the Centre's YouTube channel and social media platforms.

85. The United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta promoted the "Lend your leg" mine awareness campaign in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, with the Institute of International Studies at Gadjah Mada University and Jesuit Refugee Service, which included engaging fans on the Centre's Facebook page.

86. The United Nations office in Uzbekistan started 2013 with a new initiative, "Looking back at 2012", targeted at its partners and youth. The office asked participants to name the events they remembered most in the life of the United

Nations in Uzbekistan. The first guest to be interviewed was Nodira Maksudova, a radio news editor and the winner of the 2012 *Oltin Qalam* (Golden Pen) Award for Excellence in Journalism, "for the best coverage of the United Nations in Uzbekistan". The interview was posted on YouTube and is available as an audio podcast.

Text messaging campaigns

87. The United Nations Information Centre in Lusaka made an arrangement with Media Evolutions, a company that has direct access to mobile phone companies and their databases, allowing the Centre to send text messages to subscribers in 14 of the 72 districts in Zambia. The service allows the Centre to reach out to the public to raise awareness of United Nations observances. On United Nations Day in 2012, the Centre sent a message informing subscribers of the Day and pointing them to the United Nations website. Text messages were also sent to draw public attention to locally held United Nations-related activities.

Table 2
United Nations information centres using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and text messaging (as at December 2012)

Facebook (32)	Ankara, Baku, Beirut, Bogota, Brussels, Bucharest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dar es Salaam, Dhaka, Jakarta, La Paz, Lima, Lusaka, Manila, Mexico City, Nairobi, New Delhi, Panama City, Prague, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro, Tashkent, Tbilisi, Tehran, Tokyo, Tunis, Vienna, Warsaw, Washington, D.C., Yaoundé, Yerevan
Twitter (22)	Ankara, Bogota, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Canberra, Geneva, Jakarta, La Paz, Lusaka, Manama, Moscow, Mexico City, Nairobi, New Delhi, Panama City, Pretoria, Rio de Janeiro, Tbilisi, Tunis, Vienna, Washington, D.C., Yerevan
YouTube (18)	Bogota, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Jakarta, Kathmandu, La Paz, Lima, Moscow, Mexico City, New Delhi, Panama City, Prague, Rio de Janeiro, Tbilisi, Tokyo, Vienna, Washington, D.C., Yerevan
Flickr (4)	Bogota, Geneva, Jakarta, Manama
Text messaging (2)	Lusaka, Manama

F. Support to special missions

88. The Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Dakar was deployed in October 2012 to Bamako to provide public information support to the Deputy Secretary-General and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, who were attending the meeting of the Support and Follow-up Group on the Situation in Mali. The Director made key contacts with the international press and local media, which resulted in extensive coverage in both electronic and print

media. He also arranged for one-on-one interviews between senior officials and major media outlets. In addition, some 20 key international, regional and local media organizations published articles or broadcasted the interviews. In February 2013, the Director was deployed to Bamako as senior communications adviser to the newly established United Nations presence in Mali.

89. The Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Sana'a provided communications support to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, while the Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Cairo provided communications support to the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, following the establishment of his office in Cairo.

G. Strengthening communications training and support

Communications workshops

90. As part of the Department's continuing efforts to enhance the communications skills of the staff members of United Nations information centres, a group of eight newly recruited national information officers attended a communications workshop in Washington, D.C., in September 2012. It focused on using practical skills and tools to deal strategically with the media; building credibility and visibility for the Organization on particular issues; tailoring messages to specific situations and delivering them effectively; taking advantage of the possibilities offered by social media; and devising and implementing communications strategies. Participants attended a programme at the City University of New York School of Journalism to enhance their skills in the social media and video storytelling fields. They also benefited from a training session offered by the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat on competency-based interviewing skills.

Use of WebEx meetings

91. To confront the challenges of gathering United Nations information centre staff away from Headquarters in one place and in an effort to link them, the Strategic Communications Division has initiated a series of WebEx meetings, which allow field staff to communicate face to face, build personal rapport through cyberspace and share best practices. The first such meeting, entitled "Showcasing the work of the United Nations in the media", took place in August 2012. Another series of meetings involving the chiefs of Visitors Services at Headquarters and the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna was initiated in November 2012.

IV. Conclusions

92. The Strategic Communications Division continues to use both traditional media channels and interactive social media platforms to promote United Nations messages, news stories and campaign materials. These methods were used for both long-term campaigns, such as promoting disarmament, protecting the rights of women and girls and championing sustainable development, and news-related situations, such as the crises in Mali and the Syrian Arab Republic.

93. The Division will continue to develop innovative ways to streamline its administration, implement cost-effective ways to ensure communication between its Headquarters and field offices through the use of WebEx and other electronic means and enhance the delivery of its programmes on digital and traditional platforms through strengthened partnerships with international and local actors.

94. The Department's field offices continue to work to identify those locations where it can share premises with other United Nations entities and those where it can achieve efficiencies in smaller premises that meet the minimum operating security standards of the Organization. The Department continues to seek ways to enhance the skills of its staff to strengthen the communications role that its information centres can play and to diversify the types of information products and campaigns that it can offer.